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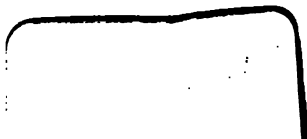




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EXPLANATION

OF A

PASSAGE IN AN ARTICLE ON CERTAIN WORKS

OF

BISHOP JEWEL,

PUBLISHED IN THE BRITISH CRITIC FOR JULY, 1841,

IN A LETTER

TO THE

REV. CHARLES SMITH BIRD, M.A. F.L.S.

LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

AUTHOR OF A " PLEA FOR THE REFORMED CHURCH."

BY THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G. F. & J. RIVINGTON,

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1842.



LONDON :
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ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

A

LETTER,

&c.

REVEREND SIR,

So much has been said and written in various quarters, and by persons of various shades of religious sentiment, sometimes directly and oftener still by implication, in the way of objection, or at least demur, to portions of an article on Bishop Jewel which appeared in the "British Critic" for July, 1841, that the writer of that article seems to be called upon, not less in justice to himself and to the editor of the Review, than out of respect to the objecting or dissatisfied parties, to offer a few words in explanation of his meaning. For persevering silence can hardly fail, under such circumstances, to be construed either into an admission of the objections, or a contempt of the objectors; and thus to betoken a want either of caution in the original publication of the

article, or of humility and charity in the mode of abiding by it. And having made up my mind, as the party in question, that it is right to defer to this general call for explanation, I have little difficulty in concluding that the most proper *form* into which to throw my explanatory remarks is that, if you will allow me, of a letter to you. And this, because you have, as I think, on the whole understood the article better than most of those who have noticed it; because you have certainly bestowed very great pains upon it; and, above all, because you have accompanied your animadversions with many kind expressions towards the objects of them.

It is, indeed, a pleasure to observe that your language, though naturally, and on your own hypothesis justly, severe against principles, in which you see nothing but danger to the cause of religion, is on the whole far more respectful and even considerate towards individuals, than that of many on your side of the controversy. You give your opponents credit, with all your strong objections to their teaching, for sincerity of purpose; nay, you seem to yourself to discern in them the spirit of martyrs.

How far this honourable testimony is warranted by circumstances, I do not undertake to determine. Founded, however, it certainly is in a more accurate acquaintance with the *doctrine* which you oppose, than is usual with writers of your sentiments. Whatever this or that person may hope or fear about his own power of carrying out, under a fiery

trial, the principles to which he is pledged; there is beyond question a *tendency*, as you seem to have discovered, in certain views of religious truth, to absorb the mind to the exclusion of all worldly and selfish considerations: and, believing as I do, that when distinctly realized, they will issue in this effect; and believing also, that they are actually thus realized to a very great, though of course an inadequate, extent in many living instances, I am not surprised that this particular evidence of their vitality and power should have forced itself upon a candid mind. The wonder rather is, that so many persons, with a reputation for shrewdness, should still flatter themselves with the hope, that the present Catholic reaction will be as ephemeral, as all admit it to be widely spread, and continually spreading.

By dint, then, of a careful perusal of the writings which you undertake to criticize, you have arrived of yourself at a conclusion which their authors have vainly endeavoured to press upon an incredulous world; namely, that they are fighting, not for a shadow, nor for a figure of their own dressing up, but for a thing of life and substance; that their view in short, must be *met*, if it be not accepted; that their principles may reasonably enough be *hated*, but cannot, without very remarkable shallowness, be *despised*. I am far indeed from saying that you seem to me to have anything like mastered the subject of which you treat, and so are able to cope with it as advantageously as you might, even for

your own side; though this, again, may be no necessary proof of your shortsightedness, but rather a result of the indistinct and defective mode in which, from circumstances, the Catholic theology may have been brought before you. Indeed, when one reflects on the irregular and disjointed way in which the doctrinal system in question has been presented to the world; in detached and occasional statements; in publications emanating from various quarters, and notwithstanding their general coincidence, each having the stamp of its writer's particular bias of mind, or habits, or circumstances: when, above all, it is remembered how different an aspect views *essentially practical* must needs bear to those who receive them from books, (written for the majority) and to those who, from constant habits of intercourse with such as profess them, are able to test them by the evidence of their fruits; it is beyond comparison more wonderful that so many should have been enabled, as if by intuition, to grasp the common purpose of these various writers, than that some should still labour under, I will not say a mistaken, but an indistinct, perception of it. You, Sir, at all events, with much that I must esteem misapprehension, feel that there is an evident depth and consistency in the teaching of your opponents; hence you speak of them in terms not of empty compliment merely, but of well considered respect; such respect as is, of course, due to appearances of sincerity even in a bad cause; such respect, therefore, as, notwithstanding my most

serious differences from you, I desire heartily to reciprocate.

In the first place, then, it gives me pleasure to cite so unimpeachable a witness as yourself in proof of the extraordinary influence which certain opinions have obtained; and that, not from their *novelty*, nor yet altogether from the mode in which they have been put out, but rather from their own intrinsic force, and suitableness to our actual circumstances.

"If there be any persons," you observe, "who think [these writers] an insignificant party, or one likely to be ephemeral, such persons have *small discernment*. Whatever else they may be, they are *too strong to be despised*. They exercise an influence in the country, which, even if it be checked in time to save the Church, will be long felt. The principles they have *revived*, and represent, and from being the representatives of which they derive their importance, *lie deep in human nature, however during past times they may have been repressed and subdued* amongst us; and when once endued with new life, and roused into action, will not die away again without a desperate and awful struggle."—p. 4.

Again, after remarking that the very boldness of these views would alone give them consequence in the eyes of the majority, you proceed:

"But they have more than a borrowed grandeur; *they have a might of their own*. They possess an inherent attractiveness for several large classes of men."—Ibid.

Here I break off, that I may not seem to acquiesce in your mode of accounting for the power and acceptability of Catholic principles. Not that I would

be unfair to you, but that I reserve for after consideration your opinion of this part of the subject; at present I am concerned only to produce your testimony to a matter of fact. But while you take, for some reasons, a very unfavourable estimate of the teaching which you discuss, and account for its influence on grounds discreditable to its character (for instance, love of power and the spirit of discontent), I am happy to observe that you also trace its effects to the operation of worthier motives.

"There are," you say, "better feelings than [these] enlisted in behalf of these writers; feelings which *rejoice in self-denial and self-sacrifice*, even to the extent of resigning what God has freely given and commanded (?) us to use."—p. 5.

Where, indeed, you find in Holy Scripture, that the use of any of the gifts and blessings which true Catholics have felt themselves called upon, under certain contingencies, to resign, is actually *enjoined upon all Christians* (which is what you must mean, for otherwise you are fighting with a shadow), and not merely *permitted* (which is all that Catholics assert), I am quite at a loss to conjecture. I wish you had been more particular in specifying the sacrifices which you suppose Catholics to recommend, and the passages of Scripture in which you find these sacrifices absolutely prohibited; for no Catholic that I know or ever heard of, goes the length of saying that *all persons, under all circumstances*, are to fast, seclude themselves, live a single life, and practise other such severities upon themselves: rather no true Catholic

denies that, in certain cases, it may be even a duty to do the reverse. On the other hand, if *to abstain* from what a Christian has *power* to use be the breach of a divine command, what say you to the case of St. Paul?

Again, if any person of Catholic profession deny that austerities may be practised in a morbid, and self-willed, and fanatical spirit, (which is what you appear, and I suppose correctly, to understand by the terms "voluntary humility" and "will-worship,") assuredly I am so far on your side, and not on his. The very first principle of the Church is, that all should be done under her guidance, and in implicit deference to her authority; and instances of *over* severity may generally be traced to the effect of some private and unauthorized view. In days, or in countries, where the Church is silent, or withdrawn into the shade, and where Christians, accordingly, must either give in to the laxity around them, or become, so to say, each his own confessor, there is probably no little danger of a revulsion on the side of excessive austerity. And it is possible, nay likely, enough, that in the desire of combating errors of an opposite, and far more hurtful, character, some writers on the anti-Protestant side may have been too little careful to guard against incidental evils of this description. But the stream of truth, here as elsewhere, will clear itself as it flows on. Those, for instance, who are *seriously* apprehensive of an *exaggerated* strictness, as one of the consequences of the

late "revival," or who may have been perplexed and disheartened by unguarded, or one-sided, statements, such as are quite certain to accompany the *earlier* stages of any great religious reaction, should be directed especially to the last published volume of Mr. Newman's Sermons, (the Sixth,) in the course of which the writer provides, with his usual forethought and considerateness, against objections or perplexities of the very kind here supposed¹. As to yourself, however, I am not quite sure that you are fairly entitled to this sort of explanation. For how do I know that it is not, after all, the whole principle of Christian strictness (*in details*) that you are impugning, and not merely its possible, though sufficiently rare, misapplications?

To return to the point with which I began. I have great pleasure in commending passages like those just quoted to the notice of such as are disposed to esteem the growing dissatisfaction with Protestant opinions and courses as a mere fancy of the times, neither deep nor durable. It cannot, as Dr. Pusey observes in his late pamphlet, be reasonably ascribed to any single series of publications, or to the influence of a limited number of divines. Speaking of one feature in this developement, the desire of Catholic unity, Dr. Pusey says,

"To feel what the Church should be, is to long that it be so. And if we come not with subdued hearts, settled to wait God's

¹ Vide especially Sermon III. pp. 37, 38.

time for his gift, and anxious to take no step but just where He leads, there must be risk that persons will seek unity in unallowed ways of their own, and, as formerly with Dissent, so now in that Communion which embraces the largest portion of Christendom, and which, in relationship as well as place, is nearest to us. *This longing must be directed; it cannot, ought not, to be quenched*; yet while it is active, (not to speak of other agents,) it were idle to think that any censure or silencing of men or books can stay *what is the result of implanted sympathies, at the very centre of Christian life and love.*"—p. 26.

And surely what is true in this instance is true in others also. Plainly there must have been aching voids in the human breast which the Oxford writers have (at least in a measure) filled, suppressed cravings which they have met, and latent sympathies which they have drawn out, or their teaching could never have taken that surprising hold of the public mind to which you bear witness. There is, as you discern, some deep philosophy at the bottom of this widely-spread excitement, which may well render it formidable to those who are inclined to mistrust it. These "ancienter than what are commonly called ancient Church principles," as you well designate them, this aboriginal and genuine Catholicism, appears to gain more and more power over its subjects day by day; storm after storm passes over their heads; the frequency of attack serves but to display and increase the power of resistance. The tone of opposition is now changed, in a very remarkable manner, from overbearing confidence to mere hopeless protest. All this strikes you as betokening

in the offensive system something like the energy of life. An energy, of course, it may be, operating towards evil as well as good; nay, some have even brought themselves to pronounce it a Satanic energy: still there is better hope that those who consider Catholic principles as living and vigorous, though untrue, will come to recognize their claims on acceptance, than those who esteem them at once false and superficial. And this, according to the acknowledged rule, that a person who sees his way clearly on one side is more likely to come in time to see it clearly on the other, than a mere waverer or dabbler. You, Sir, especially, seem to have made a considerable approach towards the opinion, surely most sound and important, that, after all, there are but two *real* systems in the world; and if so, then into these all others will ultimately resolve themselves; the one, which is grounded in Faith, or the principle of looking out of oneself to God; the other, in Self-will, or that of making oneself the centre and measure of all. These *I* should call, respectively, the truly Catholic, and the merely Protestant. I have used the words faith and self-will, because I must use some words, and prefer the suspicion of an illogical assumption to the surrender of a deeply-felt conviction. However, if any persons prefer to put for faith, superstition, or bigotry, or bondage, and for self-will, "dignity of the individual man," or "inalienable privilege of independent judgment," or "liberty of conscience," or "natural right of every true-

born Englishman," or other such eulogistic, or, as they might say, neutral and indecisive synonyme, I am not particular about a word. Now, as you pay me and my friends the compliment of supposing that we are in earnest, as for a substance and not for a fancy, I gladly express the same judgment in return of you; not hesitating to admit that you have got hold of a very real, though, as I must feel, a fatally erroneous, nay, a positively antichristian theory; while, at the same time, I am bound to add, what may be regarded by you either as a deduction from the praise, or as a qualification of the censure, that you do not seem to me always quite consistent with yourself; that you betray certain misgivings in your position, and certain sympathies with the doctrine and temper you professedly repudiate, which, while they seem to indicate a deficiency in command of your subject, and a want of thorough-going loyalty to your party, enhance my own kindly feelings towards you, and excite hopes (may they be fulfilled!) of a somewhat better (eventual) understanding between us. I will now pass on to the more immediate subject of your pamphlet.

You consider the Reformation (*English as well as Foreign*) to have operated beneficially upon the Church, *not* in correcting specific errors and abuses, but in having obtained a general recognition throughout Europe of the "right of private judgment," and the essential "liberty of conscience." And you quarrel with the Tracts, &c., apparently because their writers

do not consider that such *was* the characteristic result of the *English* changes ; or that, had it been so, it would have been any subject of congratulation.

"These principles [of the Tracts, &c.] are the direct opposites to *independence of mind* and *liberty of conscience*."—p. 4.

"Let them ridicule freedom of conscience and private judgment as they will, let these *sacred rights* be abused by those who possess them as they may, still they are invaluable privileges," &c.—p. 16.

Again, you speak of

"The undoubted liberty of conscience, and inalienable right of private judgment the *original* (sic) principles of the Reformation, of which the *British Critic* denies the existence."—*ib.*

Thus, then, one of your charges against the *British Critic* is, that it denied the principles of the English Reformation to have been *decisively Protestant*. Let this be especially observed by those respected individuals of a *Catholic* profession to whom that periodical has seemed unduly to disparage the *Catholicity* of our Reformers.

Now it is quite true, as you say, that the article to which you refer did question whether the assertion of distinctively Protestant principles were quite so certainly characteristic of the English as of the Foreign Reformation. In fact, the writer had so often heard it maintained, and upon such high authority, that the English movement was essentially *Catholic*, that, in venturing to question this opinion, he by no means undertook to affirm with confidence its oppo-

site ; he took a middle course, and spoke of the English Reformation as wearing an *ambiguous*, rather than a decidedly Catholic, any more than a decidedly Protestant, appearance. This intermediate theory appears, as might perhaps have been expected, to have displeased both of the extreme sides,—those who, with many respected writers, consider the English Reformation to have been undoubtedly Catholic, in contradistinction from the Foreign, and those who, like yourself, consider it to have been undoubtedly Protestant, in harmony with the Foreign.

Still I see no reason to recal the judgment, that it was in fact equivocal and indecisive. This, then, was what was intended in leaving it doubtful, whether the English Reformation had any definite character of its own. Nothing, I can assure you, was further from the writer's thoughts, than to express that sentiment (as you say, for once, somewhat unkindly) in a sneering and contemptuous tone ; it was meant to represent a very deep and serious feeling ; and much rather to intimate thankfulness for the fact that the English Reformation was *merely* indecisive, and not decisive on what that writer would call the wrong side. He had a regard to the prejudices, nay, he was not prepared wholly to contravene the sentiments, of those who consider that the English Reformation, so far from having been Protestant, was even Catholic. He imputed, no doubt, to Bishop Jewel, and still imputes, sympathy with the continental innovators ; while, even concerning Bishop

Jewel, he admitted that, for whatever reason, he occasionally uses Catholic *language*. But towards the close of the article (about which portion of it alone you are speaking), a digression was made from Bishop Jewel to the subject of the English Reformers and Reformation in general; and the *British Critic* is quite prepared to *maintain*, what before it did not think of *denying*,—that the earlier Reformers, and especially Bishop Ridley, not merely use Catholic language, but manifest some Catholic prepossessions, and even were inclined to act, in some respects, on Catholic principles. More than this, I, for one, could not and cannot in conscience assert. Nor do I believe that any Catholic-minded person of our communion so upholds the English Reformation and Reformers, as to deny that both the sentiments of the one, and the conduct of the other, present very perplexing, if not even contradictory, appearances. On the other hand, even those who think the most unfavourably of the English Reformation, cannot go your length of considering that it was as plainly and avowedly Protestant as the Continental. I *questioned* accordingly, in the article, whether it had any, that is, any distinct and intelligible, character of its own. The meaning of this sentiment should have been clear from preceding observations, in the course of which it was said that the English Reformers were providentially hindered from giving vent to what I must still believe to have been their secret predilections, so far as they had any at all; and that thus their

decisions practically come before us in the shape of formularies, neither (taken on the whole) *explicitly* Catholic, nor stringently Protestant, but sometimes both with a Catholic meaning and a Catholic mode of expression, as in the earlier Articles and in most of the Prayer Book; sometimes with a Protestant mode of expression, and a latent admission, or permission, of Catholic truth, as in others of the Articles.

At the same time, I am ready to repeat the opinion, (after all, however, no subject of fundamental difference with respected parties who might be mentioned,) that if the English Reformation *had* any definite character at all, it was Protestant *rather* than Catholic. For example, one sentiment of the English Reformers (whether deep enough to deserve the name of a "principle" is another question) *certainly* was, that the Temporal Sovereign of this "realm of England" is, not indeed the *source* of the spiritual *powers* of ecclesiastical persons, (though Cranmer appears to have at one time gone the length of this assertion,) but the supreme judge of the *conditions* under which these powers shall be exercised. Here, then, is one most serious innovation made by the English Reformers upon the ancient and undeniable theory of the Catholic Church, from which we shall surely recover as we advance in the line of Catholicism. Another and kindred view, which came into the Church of England for the first time at the Reformation, and has ever since, more or less,

clouded her perception of the truth, is that of her proper *independence*, as a national Church, of the rest of Christendom. This, again, is a notion, in its way quite as novel and uncatholic, as is that of the right of private judgment, in the Protestant sense of the phrase, or as the Lutheran doctrine of Justification, or as the Zuinglian view of the blessed Eucharist, or as any other of the Continental heresies, to which we thankfully acknowledge that the English Reformers did not formally commit themselves. I consider, then, that if the English Reformation had any *characteristic* of its own, in contradistinction at once from Catholicism and foreign Protestantism¹, it was this said *Erastian*, or *Insular*, spirit, so congenial to our national temper; this bold rejection of the authority of the Church Catholic over all its local dependencies, under the title, so odious to English ears, of "foreign interference²?" And this, I say, is a

¹ The recognition of *antiquity* is, I know, often urged as a distinctive feature of the Anglican Reformation; but is not *private judgment* as apt to mislead in the interpretation of antiquity as in that of Scripture? And is it not a fact (see Preface to Mr. Froude's Remains, part 2) that the English Reformers made, I do not say an unscrupulous, but certainly a very partial, use of the testimony of the Fathers?

² The opinion here expressed concerning the distinctive *character* of the Church of England, has been justified from an independent (must I not rather with sorrow say an adverse?) quarter. I refer to an elaborate article in the Quarterly Review for March 1842, on the English divines of the seventeenth century. The copious extracts there given from the writings of standard

theory from which, as we advance in Catholicism, I expect that we shall "more and more" recede.

English theologians, certainly substantiate the opinion here expressed, and formed quite without reference to the article in question, that a certain tone of Erastianism and national exclusiveness has been peculiar to the later Church of England even in its brightest days. Indeed, the citations in question are brought forward for the very purpose of proving this statement.

At the same time, I cannot but think that our English divines have some reason, on the whole, to deprecate such support as that of the Quarterly Reviewer; at all events, they who are jealous of the Catholic character of our Church, must naturally wish to rescue them from the *full* effect of his representations. And, accordingly, must it not be said that his statement is very considerably *one-sided*? Is it not, for instance, quite certain, that these divines (*e.g.* Bishop Andrewes) ought to be judged by their purely devotional, as well as by their merely controversial, writings; nay, by the former *rather* than the latter, as a fairer index to their *real* feelings? And is it not the fact, that their devotions are, as a general rule, more Catholic, *i.e.* less exclusive, than their doctrinal treatises? Again, how much of the harsh language against Rome, which disfigures the pages of English divinity, may be considered as a sort of current and traditionary mode of speaking, adopted by these writers, because their immediate predecessors had adopted it, or because it was expected of them, rather than from any very conscious mastering of its import, and foresight of its consequences? How much, again, is due to the natural tendency of strong Catholic opinions (which many of these divines assuredly held) to entail, quite unconsciously, a desire of disengaging oneself, by a course of exaggerated protest, from the suspicion of what is called Popery? How much, too, of this uncomfortable, nay unwarrantable, language, is probably used by controversialists, with the view of making their remonstrances against dissent and ultra-Protestantism all the stronger, by preli-

If, however, on the other hand, we are to consider, with you, that the exclusive and individualizing

minary exhibitions of sympathy with their opponents, upon one great subject of controversy? How often, lastly, are the views of foreign Protestants quoted, with seeming approval, by English divines, in the way of an *argumentum ad hominem*, just as a Catholic might defend himself by the authority of a dissenter; not as a perfectly satisfactory, but as the most *available*, means of conviction?

And more, perhaps, than all, it must be remarked, how little, till a comparatively late period, Protestantism had shown itself in its true colours. "Till Germany had become rationalistic and Geneva Socinian," our divines would naturally cling to the hope of enlisting the sympathy of foreign Protestants against a power which, from the time of Elizabeth, had manifested no very friendly disposition towards the Church of England. Again, the real nature of foreign Protestantism and foreign Catholicism, as then existing, was surely but little understood. Our insular habits have always co-operated with most natural hereditary prejudices in clouding and perplexing our views of the Roman system. It has been regarded till lately among us, as one vast instrument of tyranny, cruelty, and craft; and even the best of our countrymen have acquiesced in the popular and traditionary estimate, from not feeling themselves *called upon* to investigate the question. Moreover, considering how closely the Church of England has always been implicated with the State, it is not surprising that the religious sympathies of the clergy should have been materially influenced by political feelings, which in former days would incline good citizens to the Protestant side.

But at last, even supposing the Quarterly Reviewer's representation of his Church to be as fair as there seems reason for considering it partial, of what value can be the opinions, however general, and supported by whatever private claims on our respect and even reverence, of a number of divines, in *one* section of the

tendencies of the English, like those of the Foreign, Reformation, have operated, not, as here supposed,

Church Catholic, during less than a fourth part of its annals, when they happen (if so be) to clash with the judgment of the great body of Christendom, nay, and of our own part of it, among others, *up* to the age of acknowledged innovation?

I must say, with reluctance, that if this writer's account of English theology be a thoroughly well-grounded one, I can hardly conceive a statement more calculated, and under existing circumstances more likely, to prejudice the cause of our own Church.

With reference to observations made in the last-mentioned, as in other quarters, I doubt not from conscientious motives, and often with friendly intentions, I will just express my own inability to see how duty either to the English Reformers individually, or to our own Church, is, in any way, compromised by exposing the (alleged) uncatholic peculiarities of the divines of the sixteenth century. Surely, whether such reflections be just or not, these divines, were they present among us, would be among the last persons to resent them. For if just, where is the injury? and if grounded in mistake, would not the feeling of the writers be rather one of sorrow that they had given colour for the imputation of an heretical bias, than of indignation at the charge, especially when accompanied with professions of respect for them as individuals? Now that they have at least given *colour* for the suspicion, few seem disposed to deny. If they be Catholic-minded, surely they would be with us on the whole; and if not, we must uphold what we believe the truth in spite of them. Again, (unless our Church *dates* from the Reformation,) how is it any breach of duty to her, to vindicate her teaching for nearly ten centuries, by contrasting with it the novelties of latter times, or the (alleged) exceptionable doctrine of certain insulated divines? Some advocates of the English Reformation speak, I observe, of Bishop Jewel's teaching as a flaw, a vulnerable point, &c. in our Church, but speak also of the duty (which none can

in favour of the *national*, but of the merely *selfish*, principle, still more certainly, in that case, shall we "recede" from its consequences in proportion as we recover the light of Christian Truth. Here, however, the *British Critic* is at issue with those who think like yourself; I certainly, for one, would go fully along with Dr. Hook, Dr. Jelf, and other respected divines of our Church, in denying that the English Reformers, as you assert, distinctly maintained the "right of private judgment" against the authority of the Catholic, at least of the primitive, Church. I may think that their doctrine would come to this in the long run, or that their favourite theory of *Nationality* is but another and disguised *form* of the same pernicious fancy. But that neither Cranmer, nor Ridley, no, nor even Jewel, went Luther's and Calvin's lengths, so far, at least, as they are to be judged by mere expressions, seems unquestionable. And if the *British Critic* did not even go so far as to call the English Reformation *Catholic*, it is not because the works of the Reformers do not

question in the abstract) of "reverently hiding the faults of a mother." Others, however, feel that the claims of our Church are grounded on her services in *ancient*, and not merely in modern, days. If bound, for instance, to Archbishop Laud, we are still more bound to St. Anselm. Yet who will say that our duty to Archbishop Laud, for instance, so requires of us to *hide* the (*admitted*) errors or defects of the teaching of certain among the Reformers, as our duty to St. Anselm imposes on us the necessity of holding them up to censure?

language of a Catholic *sound*, but because it is impossible to believe that men who distinctly say what they said, would have written and signed what Mr. Jewel did, in the various instances denoted in the very article under consideration; or as Mr. Jewel did, in what must be called, (speaking of Mr. Jewel, and not as judging him,) his profanation of the Sanctuary. So much, then, in the way of explanation of one passage in the article on which you and others have commented: "As we grow in infidelity we must recede more and more from the principles (if any such there be) of the English Reformation."

Perhaps the most natural, and in the end the most correct, way will be to go on as I have begun, trying to evolve the meaning of certain passages in my article, which you have selected for criticism, and noticing particular statements which you have advanced as opportunity occurs.

The passage on which you have fixed as the subject of your pamphlet, is as follows:—

"It ought not to be for nothing; no, nor for any thing short of some very vital truth; some truth not to be rejected without fatal error, nor embraced without radical change; that persons of name and influence should venture upon the part of 'ecclesiastical agitators'; intrude upon the peace of the contented, and

This expression, of which a great deal has been made in quarters, is, it will be remembered, one of Mr. Froude's. Whether here, or in the place where it first occurs, it should be supposed *serious*, is hardly credible.

raise doubts in the minds of the uncomplaining; vex the Church with controversy, alarm serious men, and interrupt the established order of things; set the 'father against the son, and the mother against the daughter;' and lead the taught to say, 'I have more understanding than my teacher.' All this has been done; and all this is worth hazarding in a matter of life and death; much of it is predicted as the characteristic result, and therefore the sure criterion, of the Truth. An object thus momentous we believe to be the *unprotestantizing* (to use an offensive but forcible word) of the National Church; and accordingly, we are ready to endure, however we may lament, the undeniable, and in themselves disastrous effects of the pending controversy. But if, after all, we are not to be carried above the doctrine and tone of the English Reformers; if we are but to exchange a congenial enthusiasm for a timid moderation, a vigorous extreme for an unreal mean, an energetic Protestantism for a stiff and negative Anglicanism, we see but poor compensation for so extensive and irreparable a breach of peace and charity. The object, important as it may be in itself, is quite inadequate to the sacrifice. We cannot stand where we are; we must go backwards or forwards; and it will surely be the latter. It is absolutely necessary towards the consistency of the system which certain parties are labouring to restore, that truths should be clearly stated, which as yet have been but intimated, and others developed which are now but in germ. And, as we go on, we must recede more and more from the principles, if any such there be, of the English Reformation."

I will now proceed to give the substance of this passage in other words.

Catholic principles (as for want of a better name I must call them) being even essentially opposed to the views which came in with the Reformation; views, fully and clearly developed on the Continent, and admitted (chiefly through the influence of foreigners) to

a very baneful extent even in this country, the restoration of those principles, after which some persons are now labouring, cannot, in the nature of things, be effected without an energetic struggle, and the hazard, at least, of very miserable consequences. So far, indeed, you will agree with me, though you form a different expectation of the issue of the conflict.

"The principle," you say, "they (the Tract writers, &c.) have revived and represent will not die away without a desperate and awful struggle," p. 5.

This is because, as I have already observed, you properly consider these principles as the correlatives of deep seated sympathies of human nature. Believing them however false, though real, you anticipate for them a different fate from that which one, who believes them true, might be disposed to hope for them.

Now the object of the strong, but as it appeared necessary language of this passage was two-fold. First, to point out plainly what it seems neither wise nor well to disguise, that as yet we are but on the very threshold of this contest; that it is not, in short, as many appear to think, a question about names, and forms, and polity, and order, but about *fundamental* doctrine and powerful motives of action; this conviction it was felt a duty to state in the *British Critic*; though not, I can truly say, without a considerate regard, on the part both of writer and editor, to prepossessions, natural and amiable, of persons around us. Secondly, there seemed an object

in justifying the conduct of certain divines and others in our Church, whose course, except upon such supposition, would seem plainly unwarrantable. That the attempt to propagate these principles *has* been accompanied by effects "in themselves disastrous," it is surely as impossible to deny, as it would be uncandid to conceal. Instances are familiar to many, in which the peace of families has been most painfully disturbed, (though without fault on any side) as the direct consequence of the revival amongst us, of opinions which, certainly as respects the majority, had slept for generations. In other cases, chief friends have been separated, at least in feeling, and intercourse more or less suspended, or, at all events, free communication on the most interesting of topics precluded, as a safeguard against the double danger of dissension and unreality. All this is sad enough; yet this is hardly so sad as the almost insupportable difficulties into which considerable persons have been thrown by the necessity of reconciling their conscientious belief with their practice under existing circumstances; their duty (of course paramount) to the Catholic Church, with the often (apparently) conflicting claims of the system in which they find themselves. It is impossible, but that this especial perplexity should occasionally issue in the *semblance* of undutifulness and self-will, most foreign to the mind of the party suspected or accused, yet the suspicion or imputation of which, distressing as it is, he finds it perfectly hopeless to prevent

or to remove. Nor is the mischief slight of the encouragement thus unavoidably, though most undesignedly, given to dissenters and other disaffected persons, through the *apparent* sympathy with their tone of mind, and countenance of their ways of proceeding, on the part of persons of more or less weight, over whom they exercise a watchful scrutiny, and whom they are not perhaps sorry to be able to twit with inconsistency. Nay, and in some cases, this charge of deviation from professed principles may be more or less just; for it is certain that most of us, at other times, have pledged ourselves to this or that theory, true in the abstract, yet requiring qualification from circumstances which the progress of things has brought out into prominence. And advantage has been taken, perhaps fairly enough, and not always in the most unfriendly quarters, of these unqualified statements and improvident pledges. So that, on the whole, persons have been compelled to take a line of duty, as fine one may say, as a hair; so fine as to be often invisible though existing. They have seen their own way clearly enough, but have been obliged to resign themselves, without an effort, to the consequence of misrepresentations and misapprehensions, which could easily have been borne, had themselves been the only sufferers, but which have been materially aggravated by consideration of great public interests at stake. What, then, I repeat, but a firm conviction that the question at issue is not one of "words and

names," but much nearer to a "matter of life and death," could have induced religious men to hazard, with their eyes open, all these most undesirable results? What but this could warrant them in seeming (for, of course it is but seeming) to undervalue episcopal authority, to charge something exceedingly like heresy upon persons set over them, or, at least, to give the notion of complying in a mere literal and heartless way, with the injunctions of those, whose very thoughts they would fain, were it so ordered, anticipate?

Now this, and much more of the same kind, has been freely charged upon the movers on one side of the present controversy, and that by no inconsiderable persons; and I see no way of meeting the accusation but by either denying the fact *in toto*, or vindicating the procedure on the score of necessity. The former course I should feel disingenuous. On the other hand, if the struggle now carrying on, or impending, be, as I firmly believe, more nearly parallel to that which followed on the first promulgation of the Gospel than to any thing in later times, then it is plain that miseries, such as have been described, are the "infallible," as well as the predicted, results of a contest, which, in that case, is one between the powers of Heaven and the powers of the world. Or, again, we may, if we please, argue *à posteriori*, and read in the consequences as they have come upon us, a "sure criterion" of the momentous nature of the struggle out of which they have arisen.

Pleased indeed will persons interested in the *British Critic* be, if this explanation should serve to throw light on the meaning of a passage which was felt, while being written, to be open to the charge of abruptness, but which, as you not less truly than kindly suppose, was certainly not put out without the most careful and anxious consideration; and which, while I grieve, in common with others, that it should have startled or distressed any one, and while I am most glad in the opportunity of explaining it, neither I, nor those more immediately responsible for its appearance in print, consider ourselves under the slightest obligation to retract.

I will add further, that it seemed, at the time, a natural effect of introducing such a sentiment as that in question, to give a *name* to the object which had just before been characterized as so momentous; nor could the writer, after much thought, and a clear prospect of the consequences of the expression, (which, accordingly, was introduced under a sort of qualification,) devise any one more suitable to the purpose than "unprotestantizing the national Church." Let me now, then, respond to your appeal, and endeavour to explain the meaning of this somewhat alarming phrase. I will say, then, at once, that it would not have been adopted, but at the close of an article, the whole tenour of which, it was hoped, would have suggested the proper interpretation of it. By Protestantism, then, I under-

stand, not so much a collection of doctrines constituting a "protest" against Rome, as a certain *tone of mind*, the produce indeed of peculiar views of religion, yet actually distinct from them. Were I to speak plainly about the tone of mind in question, I should call it faithless, presumptuous, and irreverent; and should say, that it is the natural result of measuring religion by the reason and feelings of the individual, and by its present effects, instead of looking habitually away from self to an Object without us, and testing the value of things seen by the experience of a more real world withdrawn from sense. To the prevailing absence of the temper which has just been described (in one word, of Christian Faith) may be directly traced all that impatience of authority, all that devotion to creatures, all that mere preference of present expediency to principles which do not commend themselves to the majority, or realize their appointed ends upon a short trial, all that aversion from the supernatural and the saintly, as compared with what our finite* understandings can grasp, and our unregenerate powers achieve; in short, all that rationalism, on the one hand, and morbid sentimentalism, on the other, all that (essential) scepticism, and vitiated feeling, and low morality, which *undoubtedly* prevail among us.

Such, then, the persons whose feelings I am here representing consider to be some of the irreligious features of Protestantism, so far forth as it is an *ἡθος*, not a profession; and we ground our view of

it entirely upon the account given of it by its *friends*, and yourself among the number; as a system whose object is to secure "liberty of conscience" and the "right of private judgment."

Of course, we do not deny that there is a *true* sense of these terms. And here I will observe, that you seem to have somewhat misunderstood the respected Provost of Oriel, where supposing him to mean, in a striking sermon preached by him at Oxford some years ago, that "private judgment" is "*not only* a right, but even a duty." The Provost, as far as I remember, for I have not his sermon by me, contended that the exercise of private judgment ought to be esteemed *rather* as a *duty* than as a *right*. Your account of his view may come to the same thing; but it does not so obviously recognize, as I think Dr. Hawkins did, that there is something, to say the least, uncomfortable, in *Christians* arrogating to themselves *rights*, where they should be humbly and fearfully weighing *responsibilities*. No doubt each has a "right" to choose his religion, as he has a "right," *e. g.* to ruin himself; *i. e.* no one hinders him, if he please to do either the one or the other. But one point of the Provost's sermon was, if I mistake not, to show that, while it is unbecoming in Christians to plume themselves upon the *right*, it is most important for them to consider under what circumstances they are to exercise the *duty*, of private judgment. And here many persons, far from agreeing in all the opinions

of Dr. Hawkins, would not only go along with him, but regard his view of the question as exceedingly valuable and opportune. For who can doubt that, in these days especially, Christians are very often thrown, by the absence, or, again, the "uncertain sound" of authority, upon the exercise of something like private judgment, *i. e.* private, so far as it is not grounded upon any apparent, and, as one may say, presentable, authority, though, of course, *assisted* to the greatest extent by "authoritative" decisions of some sort? But I can never suppose the Provost to mean that, for instance, an under-graduate member of his own college should listen to his advice, or receive his commands, in a *sceptical* spirit, (which is what Protestantism, consistently carried out, would come to,) or that, whatever may be the duty of one who has to choose, *ab initio*, between conflicting systems in a perfectly unbiassed state of mind, (an uncommon case, by the way,) one who actually finds himself the subject of a system, is to go out of his way to criticize its pretensions, or question its results as they affect himself.

Such, then, is the general idea of Protestantism, under which a person might speak of *un-protestantizing* the National Church, as an object well worth the risk of very serious intermediate consequences. And when the matter comes to be considered more in detail, will it not be found that the particular national evils which all parties among us are more or less agreed in deploring, may be traced

very directly to the effect of tempers and habits of mind, which, though not the *product* of the Reformation, certainly gained strength and encouragement through the disturbance of ancient prejudices to which that great convulsion was avowedly instrumental? Nor, accordingly, do I and my friends see any hope for our country, but through the restoration of principles and the revival of institutions which would undoubtedly be considered by many persons as an innovation upon our *actual* system.

For instance, there is but one opinion among religious men of all sorts, respecting the urgent necessity of providing some remedy for the frightful state of the population in our large towns. Now, shall it be thought undutiful to our own Church to say that, until her sons get entirely rid of those particular notions which you and others consider as her glory, she will be quite unequal to that contest with the powers of darkness to which, under existing circumstances, she appears to be especially summoned? Consider only, how much of the mischief to which we are now referring, is to be laid at the door of *self-indulgence*. Manufactories come of luxury, and thick-set population come of manufactories, and vice and irreligion flourish in thickly-peopled districts. Now, self-denying as many individual Protestants have been and are, will it be said that self-denial is a Protestant virtue? Or is it not rather the Protestant way to fasten some such odious names as "asceticism," "self-righteousness," and the like, upon those

Catholic practices (such as fasting) which, with whatever incidental evils or dangers accompanied, surely tend *against*, and not *towards*, the corruptions of the day? Again, Protestantism, so far as it is the mere negation of Popery, does not set itself resolutely, if at all, against that exclusive or, at least, eager *pursuit of wealth*, which all religious men feel to be at the root of these corruptions. This arises, in a great measure, from its antipathy to the contemplative life; which, having first calumniated Christian strictness under the term "asceticism," it proceeds to traduce under the equally unpopular name of "mysticism." In entire accordance with this view, it is common with anti-catholic, or un-catholic, writers and speakers, to give a very important rank to *civilization* among the objects of a religious establishment or a religious mission. Now, certainly money-making is not so incompatible with this particular estimate of religion, as to be necessarily wrong, if it be right. This view of Christianity, as a great engine in civilizing and humanizing the world, is, as might be expected, a great favourite with mere politicians; and even religious men, who do *not* keep another world out of sight, are often found in practice to make common cause, so far, with statesmen by profession, who do. Now, the *idea* of religion in question may be called, without any fear of contradiction, a characteristically *Protestant* one. Say what one may in defence of a theory, there can be no doubt that it is a view of the three latter centuries rather

than of the fifteen former. We understand comfort, as all will admit, far better than our ancestors. Comfort is an English term, all the world over; and it is quite proverbial, that the more Protestant a country is, the more decent and respectable are its inhabitants. There are neater cottages, better roads, more generally well-dressed people, more comfortable inns in Scotland, for instance, than in Ireland; or in the Protestant cantons of Switzerland, than in the Catholic. You will not understand me to disparage such things in their proper places; still, where comfort and snugness are made principal objects, where goodness is measured by respectability, and actions tested by success, (which none can deny to be the *tendency* of things around us,) while deep doctrines are put aside as unintelligible, and lofty aims derided as impracticable, I am not sanguine enough to expect any very forcible impression upon the dense mass of evil which has been suffered to accumulate around us.

But let us consider Protestantism in the point of view in which you take pleasure in exhibiting it; as religion based on the exercise of private judgment. Here, again, surely, it is directly in the teeth of all those "home-missionary" attempts, which, and nothing short of which, I verily believe to be demanded of us. Is it not obvious that we must all be agreed upon the truth to which men are to be converted, before we can attempt to convert them? Yet your rule makes union and unity impossible; indeed, Pro-

testants are accustomed to say, what no doubt, in a measure, is the fact, that truth is elicited by means of differences. Still, what so cripples all our ministerial exertions as these "unhappy divisions," which come of each man believing what is right in his own eyes? Which are poor ignorant people to *trust* of the numerous discordant voices that break upon their ears; and especially since some of their teachers tell them to make a duty of receiving *nothing* upon trust? Surely, never were two notions devised, more fatal to the progress of Gospel light and truth, than those which are among (mere) Protestants even axiomatic; the first, that instruction, and not worship, is the great business of religion; the second, that the recipient of doctrine is to be at the same time its arbiter. Why, if the primitive Christians had gone by these rules, the world would now be no wiser than it was 1900 years ago! The public mind would, on these principles, be kept in a perpetual state of insoluble doubt and interminable inquiry: 2 Tim. iii. 7. would then be a description, and St. John xviii. 38. would furnish an illustration, of the *summum bonum* of responsible agents.

Let some of my respected friends remember, that I am all along arguing with a *Protestant*, not with an *Anglican*. From a reverent and faithful use of our Church *prayers*, I should hope all good. But the Church prayers are designed for Christians; and while, on the one hand, very many of those before whom we place them are not necessarily such in any

sense, our present system of *teaching*, conducted as it is upon no sound Church principle, operates against those tempers of mind, child-like docility, implicit faith, and shrinking awe, which are essential conditions of benefit from the use of Church ordinances. Our people have got into a condition of absolutely heathen darkness, from which they must be *aroused*, before they can be *edified*. And for this purpose, we stand in need of a machinery, to use a cold word, which it is no discredit to the Church of England to say that she lacks, when there has been so little in the circumstances of the last three centuries to force her on the use of it. Her lot has been cast in a fair ground; it may be that she has so long luxuriated in peace as to be unable, at once, to recover the management of her weapons. The world has smiled on her, and made her duties comparatively smooth and pleasant; her functions have been discharged in quiet neighbourhoods, and her powers exercised over dutiful and willing minds. For a long time, mere loyalty to kings, who were regarded as one with the Church, indeed as its visible heads, was a security for the churchmanship of the nation; supplying, in a measure, the place of that allegiance to the Church *as such*, which was the characteristic of earlier times. *Now*, the scene is changed; the age of chivalry is at an end; and the Church, no longer countenanced, except on the hollowest of grounds, by men in power, and precluded from the sympathy of all but those who love her for her own sake, is thrown upon

her independent resources; and is required to sustain, single-handed, the conflict with enemies of ten-fold greater strength than those against whom she was once enabled to command the assistance of numerous and powerful auxiliaries. Present appearances, indeed, are all in favour of success; still, it does not follow that we shall triumph over present, *merely* because we have triumphed over former difficulties. Times are changed; enemies are multiplied, and aids have been withdrawn. Faith is well nigh extinct in the land. Men, ay, and women and children too, have learned to reason and to disobey; to account religion superstition, and Church rule tyranny. This comes *directly* of our Protestantism; and how shall the evil be encountered, but through recourse, in trust of a blessing, to those unworldly means by which the genuine Reformers of the middle ages were enabled to dislodge corruptions in their way equally formidable; religious association, the resignation of wealth, disengagement from family ties, regular living, and habitual devotion?

The "radical change," then, of which the article spoke, as the necessary consequence of embracing Catholic religion, was not meant (as you seem to imagine,) to be one in the external constitution of the Church, nor in her essential doctrines, but in *tone*. The article never went the length of saying, that the National Church must be remoulded; her formularies and service-books reconstructed; or, again, that she was to *seek* re-union with Rome under actual cir-

cumstances: it confined itself to a more general object and a more immediate step,—the infusion into her system of a new *spirit*. What, indeed, may be the particular conditions, under which alone this spirit can be thoroughly and widely diffused, or what the ulterior results to which its admission may tend, are farther questions, upon which the article did not enter. It will be time enough to think of these features of the scene, when our progress shall have brought them more directly in sight.

I have thus mentioned one department of national grievance, of the most prominent kind, in which Protestant theories, so far from offering a remedy against existing ills, appear to be much rather at the very root of the disease. From the spiritual condition of the poor, it would be natural to pass on to their temporal condition, which, it may be boldly said, has been deteriorated exactly in proportion as the Church has lost her hold upon the affections of her children, and ceased to regard the poor and afflicted as the especial objects of her maternal care.

But, instead of going on with my enumeration, I prefer the shorter method of challenging the advocates of pure Protestantism to point out, in what single respect, that can be called strictly religious, the world is the better for its deviation from the ancient standard? I am not, of course, speaking about modifications of doctrine, and *protests* against existing corruptions, of which the Reformation was

productive; these may fairly be set down to the account, not of Protestantism, but of the Church. Again, I do not deny that Protestantism (proper) has disseminated grand ideas of national dignity and independence; that it has freed the intellect from what are accounted pernicious trammels; that it has given a stimulus to trade and commerce; that it has diffused (though certainly not deepened) literature: splendid results indeed if this world were all! But that religious men, knowing and believing what the Gospel says of the temper of little children, and the perils of wealth, and empire, and unrestrained intellectual speculation, should speak of the Reformation as a boon, not in that (as they might say) it purified, but in that it "emancipated;" not in that it involved, or entailed, the correction of particular abuses, but in that it effected the overthrow of ancient institutions; not in that it made men holier, but in that it made them richer, magnified their self-importance, and raised their country to a distinguished and enviable position, is one of the most surprising, though far from the least instructive, among the phenomena of the wonderful days we live in!

To take the matter in another point of view. Let any one compare his impression of society, say in the middle ages, with his experience of his own times. At which period is there the greater *appearance* of treating religion as a *real* matter? Surely, for example, our Universities and Cathedrals are standing monuments of zeal and carefulness about things divine,

to which nothing in later times presents any kind of parallel. Just at present, indeed, there are happy symptoms of a revival of the ancient spirit of devotion and munificence. Let us be thankful for every thing. But have not these indications of a more (obviously) religious spirit exactly kept pace with our return to those *Catholic* feelings, which, as you yourself say, have "in past times been repressed and subdued among us?"

Or look we, again, at the statutes of these same Universities and Cathedrals, or at the ancient laws and institutions of the realm. What unequivocal tokens do they wear of having been framed by men with the fear of God before their eyes! And is not this, again, a feature of significant contrast with merely Protestant ages and countries?

Again, is it not evident from the slightest survey of mediæval history, how extensively religious considerations used to enter into questions of national policy and government, war and peace, colonization, and the like? Substitute, if you will, the word "ecclesiastical" for "religious." Still, is not even superstition something more *like* religion (and this is all for which I am contending) than *irreligion*?

Nay, and coincidently with the decay of the Church among us, has there not also been a very remarkable falling off in the delicacy and quickness of moral perceptions? One instance suggests itself at the moment; the difference between the respective estimates, among Catholics and mere Protestants, of the

sin of Simony, and its cognate delinquencies. It is unnecessary to do more than glance at a subject which you will find fully and ably discussed in the *British Critic* for Oct. 1841. But it may just be asked, what kind of impression would have been produced on the mind of a religious person of the age of Gregory VII., or of that calumniated Prelate himself, by the tone in which questions of this nature are often treated even by serious and respectable men of our own time? What can be imagined more repulsive to the temper of the Catholic ages than the way in which "the Church" is now very commonly spoken of as a road to preferment, or a suitable "provision?" Nay, I will venture to say that there is no Catholic country in Europe, even in these degenerate days of Christendom, in which our own current language on such topics would not excite amazement and abhorrence.

I have cited this instance as one which comes especially home to members of the sacred calling. If the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? If, on such very fundamental points, there be a lax tone among the Clergy, what is to be expected of the world? Now it would not be difficult to connect, were this the time and place, this relaxation of strictness with the prevalence of Lutheran doctrine, in conjunction with the disparagement and practical discontinuance of those special provisions which Catholicism makes for the habitual examination of conscience.

And if, again, it be urged, that the disuse of forms, and the disavowal of Church authority, has been attended by a proportionate increase of spiritual religion, this, it must be said, is quite at variance with the facts of the case. The "hidden life" of religion has ever been most fully and extensively realized in the Church, in proportion to the distinctness with which dogmatic truth has been enunciated, the care which has been bestowed upon the external service of the Sanctuary, and the obviousness with which the Church has displayed the visible tokens of her empire. If untiring zeal, unbounded charity, unreserved self-immolation, habitual converse with the unseen world, the union between the completest disengagement from the things of time and sense with the most punctual fulfilment of the social duties, and, (as the crowning grace of all,) the deepest humility, be genuine features of the Evangelical character, (as who will be bold enough to deny?) where shall we look for a more decided witness to the practical influence of Christian principles, than in the lives of those great Saints of the middle, as well as of the earlier, ages, who were also the most enlightened champions of the Catholic Faith, the most exact in their observance of the duties of external religion, and the most resolute assertors of the Church's spiritual dominion?

That we have *lost* something through the influence of modern notions, few but extreme parties will be apt to question. But I would rather ask what, on the other

hand, we have *gained* by them? What contributions of its own has your Protestantism left us in the place of those privileges and comforts of which it has robbed us? What has it *constructed* in the place of what, whether with good or with evil intention, or effect, it has demolished? It would have been something, if, while declaring war against the Chair of St. Peter, it had given its votaries real liberty in the place of an alleged despotism. But it has only removed one "yoke" to impose another; which may be said, without going on to inquire, whether the Pope, (even granting, for argument sake, that his supremacy is a tyranny,) be not a better master than Luther, Calvin, or Henry VIII. It would have been something, if, while declaiming against the darkness of the middle ages, and the paralyzing influence of Church authority, it had substituted a deeper or truer tone of *philosophy*, and provided a fuller satisfaction for the cravings even of our *intellectual* nature. Yet even Protestants, who were for a while the disciples of Locke or Paley, are beginning to desert to the ranks of Aquinas. Protestantism avowedly slights imagination; but is its superiority so unquestionable in its own selected province of *reason*?

Again, is it clear, that the monasteries, in which, as all admit, a greater point was made of *stated prayer* than in merely Protestant seminaries, were as much behind their modern substitutes as this circumstance might have led us to expect, in the department of *literary industry*?

Once more. Persons sometimes say, and with more or less truth on their side, that edification, rather than conversion,—sustaining the Christian life, in those who have been baptized from infancy, rather than bringing strangers into the Christian sheepfold, is what may be called the especial *line* of the Church. But, on the other hand, is this true in any sense which implies that missionary proceedings are *not also* in the way of the Church, by contrast with any religious system, or rather with the one great religious system, manifold in its ramifications, external to her? Must it not be admitted that, beyond all praise as has been the zeal of individual Protestant missionaries, the traces of their influence throughout the world are as nothing in comparison with the proofs, yielded in every quarter of the globe, of the hold which the Church takes of her sons and subjects reclaimed from heathenism? Of course, those who feel with me would say, that all this is because Protestants (*quâ* Protestants) are deficient in that clear-sighted view of Truth as an object worth contending for, which is of the very essence of the martyr-spirit. The more honour, no doubt, to those of them whose personal faith has triumphed over the disadvantages of their position, and tended, in a measure, to supply, under circumstances more or less out of their control, the place of that life which is the appointed fruit of Sacramental ordinances! But the *effects* of Protestant teaching, have by no means kept pace with the zeal of individual

dilating; and that is, the singularly defective and unreal way in which professed Protestants are apt to treat the last-named solemn and gracious Mystery (of the Passion), when contrasted with the exuberant richness, the profound affectionateness, the heartfelt and heart-searching reality of the mediæval divines. Let any one, for instance, compare the Passion Homilies of Thomas à Kempis, recently brought before the English reader, with modern sermons on the same subject. Now, to say that the Catholic divine is as plainly alive to the cardinal importance and vital power of the great verity in question, as if he did not also recognize the intercessory offices of the Blessed Virgin and Saints, is to say what is the truth, but immeasurably short of the whole truth. So it is, that his devotion, for instance, to St. Mary (expressed in terms shocking to Protestant ears, and startling even to catholic-minded persons out of his own communion) appears to be consistent, if not rather intimately connected, with a most vivid perception of the depth and fulness of religious mysteries in general; and that of the Cross in a most especial manner. I am not undertaking to defend all the expressions in which ardent writers of the Roman communion are apt to indulge when speaking of the Saints; but it is certainly a remarkable fact, which should in all fairness be pleaded in arrest of harsh judgments, that the most glowing language on the subject of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, is gene-

rally united with the highest devotion to the *Passion of our Lord*. Saint Buonaventura is an obvious instance in point; but the same is true of a writer who, strange to say, is acceptable to many Protestants, — the reputed author of the “*Imitation of Christ*”¹. May it not be, that common men, like ourselves, have, after all, but a shallow insight into the minds of the Saints; and so are continually tempted to declare irreconcilable, on abstract grounds, trains of thought which they seem to have found, not compatible merely, but mutually dependent? And if so, how little certainty is there that the same language which might be natural to them, would be, necessarily, even so much as safe in us!

It is very irksome to speak with seeming harshness of a religious system which, however faulty in itself, is connected, as it actually comes before us, with so much that is of a diviner origin and a holier complexion. Indeed it cannot be too often, nor too earnestly expressed, how anxiously persons on my own side are to discriminate between the *system* which we

¹ For instance, “*Laudet te anima mea, Domina charissima, et omnia interiora mea jubilent coram te cum summa reverentia. Suscipe vota mea et pio affectu attende cordis mei desideria. Ostende mihi Thesaurum absconditum quem apud te habes reconditum. Ipsum per te quæro videre . . . Nisi enim tu, Mater sancta, idipsum dignaris ostendere, quis merebitur inspicere? Per te enim accessum habemus ad Filium, et per Filium ad Patrem,*” (Thomas à Kempis, Homil. 10, de Nativ. Christi.)

are compelled to treat as vicious and antichristian, and its professors and advocates, some of whom have been even benefactors (indirect and unconscious, of course,) to the Catholic cause. The danger, indeed, of being supposed to involve *persons* in the charge which is brought against *principles*, is, I can honestly say, one of the chief difficulties which we feel to embarrass the course of those who are seeking to obtain a hearing for the Church of their ancestors.

Again, I am painfully conscious that the line of remark taken up, for instance, in this very letter, must appear to proceed upon the assumption, as abhorrent as possible from my feelings, as far as I know them, of some superior depth and acumen. I am not the least surprised that animadversions such as those which I have now felt it my duty to make, should wear, in the eyes of many, the semblance of mere gratuitous railing; grounded upon a theory at once unsubstantial and full of pretence, and tending to no benefit commensurate with the present ill consequences of distressing, if so be, amiable persons, and disturbing popular prejudices. Again, we deeply feel that the course of those who are obliged to speak strongly upon the subject of anti-catholic peculiarities, would be greatly cleared and smoothed, were there any distinct and generally-acknowledged representation of the antagonist principles to which they could confidently appeal in illustration of their remarks and in vindication of their tone. As it is, good and evil are so intermin-

gled *on both sides*, that it is drawing somewhat unreasonably upon an opponent's powers of abstraction, as well as his candour and impartiality, to expect that he will see pure good on our side, where there is still so much to perplex, if not to repel; pure evil on his own, where there is so much, as all must admit, to command respect and love.

For instance, it ought always to be remembered, as a motive to forbearance, and as a remedy against impatience, what very just discredit has in past times been brought on what are called high church principles by the dry and technical mode in which they have been inculcated, not to speak of the most uncatholic tempers and courses which were sometimes found in connexion with them. Much, no doubt, there was, and is, in individual high churchmen of a former generation to excite feelings even of reverence. Their excellencies are their own; their defects often those of their time. Still, it cannot be denied that, twenty or thirty years ago, the advantage, on the whole, in point of zeal, strictness, and unworldliness, was greatly on the side of those who maintained what used to be termed *low* views of Church doctrine. And, miserable as many of these views in themselves are, it must be said, with shame and sorrow, that some of the excellent men who professed them were thrown upon them almost in self defence. Who of us, for instance, but must feel of a book like Mr. Wilberforce's "*Practical View*," that, with much of which a Churchman might

justly complain, there is an appearance about it of *realizing* the importance of sacred truth, which forms a pleasant contrast to the stiff and didactic tone of the Georgian divines? Wherein Mr. Wilberforce and the best writers of his school insist on the duty of doing all to the Divine glory, of setting oneself against prevailing follies of the world, of devoting much time to prayer and other religious employments (of some kind), surely they breathe not merely a religious, but a distinctively *Catholic* spirit; they are so far infinitely *more* Catholic than many a high churchman (so called) who has decried this account of religion as extravagant and fanatical. Though, again, (as I am now saying, what can be said for *all* sides,) I must put in a plea for those churchmen whose reverence for Sacramental religion has not unnaturally somewhat blinded them to the redeeming qualities of the school which overlooks it.

I have here touched upon a subject which might profitably admit of more extended consideration; that of the unconscious testimony often borne by persons of the school miscalled evangelical to the value of *portions* of the Catholic system. It is pleasant, in these dreary times, to consider how much probably there is in that body, of unconscious sympathy with the *affectionate* side of the Church doctrine. All *truly* religious people, be their circumstances what they may, have the essential points of temper and character in common; and this, as we come to understand one another better, will be felt and acknowledged to

the exceeding benefit and comfort of us all. The Catholic system being the "correlative of human nature," wherever human nature has fair play, is not stunted, or forced, by the effects of an ungenial, or artificial, atmosphere, it will surely betray its proper predilections; and if its appointed rest and stay be not provided, it will seize and fasten itself upon the best of the substitutes which happen to come in its way. Genuine faith cannot subsist without sacraments; and where the true are withholden, it will create media of its own. This may, perhaps, be the secret of that devotion to the (mere) Bible, which has come in connexion with the neglect of other ordinances. The Bible has been the absolute, nay, and we may trust, the efficacious, sacrament of hundreds, who, without fault of their own, have lived and died in ignorance of true Church doctrine. The extensive circulation of the Scriptures in later times, by whatever questionable means effected, has, on the whole, been a most real blessing to the world. Strange inconsistency, no doubt, that the same persons should have been foremost in declaiming against superstition, who have done their best to encourage what, *upon their principles*, is a strictly superstitious veneration for the mere text of the Bible! But so it is, that the Scriptures, while to many, we must fear, they have been (as the Sacraments may also be) a "savour of death unto death," the food, because estimated after a merely intellectual standard, of heretical, or yet worse, speculations; have

been by many more received in implicit faith; "trusted" (in the language of the day) "as a charm," used as an "opus operatum," and blessed to the recipient accordingly. Many a poor unlearned man has read his "chapter" with no other illustration than the light which ever comes of humility and reverence; those best, surely, of biblical commentators; and who shall say that to such an one, where cut off through unhappy and uncontrollable circumstances from the appointed channels of grace, the private study of the Written Word has not gone far to supply the place of farther privileges? Good, then, we may thankfully believe, of a very signal kind has arisen out of that unqualified reverence for Scripture, which persons have inculcated under the idea of displacing the Church. Such persons, little as they have intended it, have, on the whole, fostered a spirit of *faith*, and so far have done the Church's work. In order to dispossess the Church of her ground, they have been obliged to claim reverence for *something*; and to ask merely a *qualified* respect for Scripture, would have been to leave an opening for the Church, which, at any rate, was to be excluded. One idol could not be dislodged but by setting up another; and surely, considering what might have befallen us, thankful, indeed, may we be that the enthusiasm of the age has set in so holy a direction.

Instead, then, of the Church being, as in a perfect state of things, the interpreter of the Bible, the

Bible, under actual circumstances, has been the handmaid and precursor of the Church. And this, of course, to no small extent, in the amount of witness borne to especially Church doctrine on the very surface of Scripture, and through the exercise of Christian *good sense*, in union with humility, upon its contents; but likewise as it has acted the part, so to say, of a provisional sacrament. It has kept faith alive in its exile or imprisonment. It has sown the crop which the Church will reap. It has been to us like the Law, or the preaching of the Baptist; a schoolmaster to train us for better things; a herald to proclaim the approach of a more perfect Dispensation. Many are the weakly souls which it has nurtured against the time of higher enterprise; many, the impatient spirits which it has disciplined for the revelation of sights unedifying to the dull-hearted, enervating to the merely ardent; to those alone, who have been educated in the school of self-denial and patience, full of sweetness and joy.

We may well rejoice, then, in the hope that, even among those who speak harshly, because in ignorance, of Catholic Truth, but whose lives often bear unequivocal testimony to the presence of a better spirit, the Church, when she comes forth like a bride in all her jewelry, will find not a few of "her own." That they do not as yet recognize her, we would fain attribute, not so much to their lack of spiritual intelligence, as to the indistinctness with which, from

whatever cause, our true Mother has hitherto disclosed herself.

For, as I have said, it would have needed a far more powerful exercise of faith against sight than can reasonably be expected of the majority, to discern the Church of the Prophecies in the peculiar development of the established religion, which commonly went by the name of "high churchmanship" at the beginning of the present century. Of course, I am not denying that the Church was amongst us, and might have been found, nay, and *was* found by the "faithful few." All I say is, that great *excuses* ought to be made for those who failed to discover it. For in looking about, they would certainly have been perplexed by this strange anomaly; that whereas, in the true Church, the profession of orthodoxy and the profession of strictness have always gone together; with us, till a comparatively recent period, and always making allowance for some illustrious exceptions, they were most unnaturally *divorced*. On the one side were the so-called orthodox, decrying strictness as fanaticism, and on the other, the so-called evangelical, decrying dogmatic statements as a yoke upon the conscience, and sacraments as superstition. Now, it is not questioned that there were, on both sides, individuals *better* than their respective professions; churchmen essentially holy, while with a morbid sensitiveness to the danger of enthusiasm; and "evangelicals" essentially right-minded, while con-

tending against the principle of a dogmatic theology and a sacramental medium. Still (which is the point) dissenters and dissenter-like churchmen certainly used, in former days, to be popularly considered as *on the side* of strictness ; so that the terms " Methodist," " Puritan," " righteous over-much," and the like, were applied, even in respectable circles, not merely to persons of our own communion who did good things in an indiscreet and unnatural way, but to every one who felt scruples about falling in with the practices of the world around him. And such being the usual current of thought and language, it would have been expecting a good deal to suppose, that the generality of religious men would regard the Church system in its abstract excellence rather than its concrete misrepresentations ; or that, in forming their *beau ideal* of the Anglican theory, they would revert (as no doubt they *ought* to have done) to the Hammonds, and Andreweses, and George Herberts of old, (not to speak of living instances,) instead of running away with impressions derived from sadly defective specimens around them ¹.

¹ The confusion of ideas in question may be traced as far back as the days of the Puritans. And must it not be said, with reluctance, that the great writer to whom, far more than to professed historians, our age owes its impressions of the average religious tone of the 17th century, valuable as in many respects his influence has been, and operating, to a certain extent, in a Catholic direction, has contributed, not a little, to this unhappy *misalliance*

Now, in the whole matter of strictness and non-conformity with the world, (in the true sense of that equivocal phrase,) it is certain that the so-called evangelical body would have found a better witness to their abstract principles (as distinct from their ordinary misapplication of them) in the Catholic system as developed, for instance, in the early or middle ages, than in that very delusive representation of it which goes by the name of high churchmanship. I hope it will displease no one if I say, half in pleasantry, that I do most exceedingly doubt what kind of reception a person like St. Augustine or St. Bernard would have encountered from some, even of the

of associations? Surely the general effect of Sir Walter Scott's writings, especially with young people, is to create a sympathy with the convivial and relaxed, and a repulsion from the austere, character; and that, too, as if, in some undefinable way, the former were connected with sounder Church views than the latter. Of course, I am not setting up the Puritans as models of *austerity*, nor, again, disparaging frankness and kind-heartedness (as distinct from any more positively Christian temper) in their proper place; but, considering how little the temptation of younger persons lies on the side of *professing too much*, there seems exceeding risk in putting it into their heads that *hypocrisy* is the chief of vices. Is it too much to say, that in some of these popular and fascinating novels there is the same kind of danger (though with a superiority of tone on their side which almost disinclines one to the comparison) as in Sheridan's "School for Scandal," or, again, in that most immoral of plays, "The Hypocrite?"

more respectable "high churchmen," at least of a former generation. Not, indeed, that another party would have found their own peculiar mode of strictness exemplified in the Saints of old; far otherwise. The Saints would have exhibited none of the stiffness, pedantry, and punctiliousness of the modern school; one can fancy them, with all their severity, going on in an ordinary company, very much in the way of people about them; conforming to innocent usages; full of cheerfulness, kindness, and presence of mind; perfectly at their ease; and not *remarkable*, as seen once in a way, for *any thing*. But all this would not, I suspect, have rescued them *on the whole* from the charge of oddity, dreaminess, nay, and even over strictness, in the eyes of many professing churchmen.

For points there certainly are, of protest against existing ways of going on, in which the Catholic Church will be found on the side of men whom, some time ago, it was the custom to denounce as enthusiasts. Take, for instance, the whole subject of *fashionable* amusements. Now I am not going to say anything against plays and balls in the abstract; still, as at present generally conducted, I suppose there cannot be two opinions as to the light in which a catholic-minded person must regard them. I happen, then, at the moment, to cast my eye upon a book of private devotion, Catholic, though not of our own communion, and I gladly extract the following passage, which bears upon the present subject. Among

other instructions for the regulation of daily conduct, it says,

"Take care that your recreations be innocent, and although lively and cheerful, yet seasoned always with modesty and discretion. Never play at any game of mere hazard ; and whenever you do play at any other game, never risk any considerable loss. In regard to theatrical amusements, the best and wisest plan that you can observe is, to abstain from them entirely. They are often sinful, and in general dangerous. A fondness for them is easily acquired, and that fondness commonly leads to sin. *On this subject, the opinion of all spiritual writers is uniformly the same.*"

Now no one can deny that this advice is as unlike the pseudo-churchmanship of a former period *in its substance*, as it is unlike Puritanism *in its tone* ; yet that it is *Catholic* as far as it goes, is unquestionable. It may be added, that as to the clergy, there are in foreign Catholic countries very strong feelings indeed against their partaking in public amusements, or even mixing, to any extent, in indiscriminate companies. In Normandy, for instance, I was told that it is discreditable for a Priest to be seen, without apparent reason, at places of public resort ; play-going is absolutely forbidden, and dining-out a good deal discountenanced.

The more, then, the whole body of Catholic truth, practical as well as doctrinal, comes to be exhibited amongst us, its several parts in due mutual *relief*, and the whole together properly adjusted and harmonized, the more, I am confident, will religious

men, of whatever school, come to recognize its claims upon their homage and acceptance. And this, I can assure you, Sir, and nothing more than this, was the meaning of a sentence in my article which you are pleased to dignify with the epithet "portentous." Can you for a moment suppose that the depths of the ancient Truth could have been fully explored (even rating the powers of those who have been engaged in the attempt as highly as their friends are disposed to rate them) in so short a time, and against the prejudices of three hundred years' accumulation? But, at least, permit me to observe, that when I spoke of "truths to be announced which as yet had been but intimated, or developed which are now but in germ," I was referring chiefly to subjects which I believe will be far more apt to conciliate opponents than to harden them in their opposition. That the effect of what has hitherto been brought forward, considering under how different a system we have all been trained, should have been startling, is any thing but matter of wonder; but I have every reason to hope that what is said for the future will be felt as much rather in the way of *explanation* and *adjustment*, than of addition and exaggeration. What I expect is, that while the Truth, as a whole, will be *developed*, particular *features* of it which, from circumstances, have received undue prominence, will be *softened*, as the rest are brought out.

I here allude especially to the *devotional* depart-

ment of Catholicism, which from its very nature, and under our circumstances, would hardly be among the earliest to claim prominent and explicit notice. Religious *feeling* is valuable only so far as it is kept in strict harmony with sound religious *doctrine*; and it would have been beginning at the wrong end to try and *force* devotion, till its only right foundation had been laid in *orthodoxy*. Persons, therefore, having the interests of the Church at heart, would be apt to draw attention, in the first instance, to subjects such as the Apostolical Succession and the Sacraments, which are connected with the very being of a Church; and such, accordingly, seems to have been the course of the Tract-writers, especially in their earlier publications. Again, even admitting, for argument's sake, that the devotional side of the Catholic character has practically been too much overlooked by the writers in question, still what more probable than this, in the way of reaction, from the tone of religion which prevailed in many quarters at the beginning of the movement? The Tracts, as confessedly doctrinal treatises, were directed against the party in the Church which disparaged, not against that which formally upheld, the Sacraments; and morbid excitability of feeling being one of the principal characteristics of that party, there would be a natural and, as many must feel, a most considerate, unwillingness on the other side to encourage lines of thought which, in catholic minds, might be strict-

ly religious, but in un-catholic, would be merely sentimental. So far, then, as any one *tone of feeling* rather than another was an object with these writers, it would be *reverence* rather than fervour, which they would endeavour to secure. They might, and probably did, feel, that while one set of persons needed sobering and tranquillizing, another needed elevating; but they had to make their choice, and considered that, as they could not attempt both without risking both, it was, on the whole, and in the first instance, of more consequence, to enforce sound doctrine upon the ardent, than to infuse high feeling into the right-minded. Accordingly, so far as they deviated at all from the mere doctrinal line, it was in favour of such subjects as that of "*reserve* in the communication of religious knowledge," or again, the benefit of *fasting*; digressions, both of them, tending in the same direction. Again, it is well known that those among the mysteries of our religion which constitute the very life of Catholic devotion, are, on the one hand, the Passion of our Blessed Lord, and, on the other, the doctrine of the Communion of Saints; points, surely, on which the mind ought not to be trusted to expatiate until it has been first well rooted and grounded in the Faith. For how certain is it that an awful sense of the *Athanasian* doctrine is quite a necessary condition of the right indulgence of those glowing and affectionate feelings, which the great Mystery of Love

should awaken in every Christian heart? On the other hand, what prudent guide would take on himself the responsibility of introducing to those vivid impressions of the Ministry of Angels, for instance, or of the Fellowship of the Saints, which prevailed even in the earlier, and still more in the middle, ages, a mind which had neither been schooled by discipline for a course of exciting meditation, nor had lived sufficiently in the atmosphere of a dogmatic and sacramental theology, to be proof against the danger of a distracted contemplation, if not a divided allegiance?

Such are some of the grounds, upon which, without being in the secret, I attempt to account for what some persons have considered a certain coldness and stiffness in the great theological developement of the last ten years. At the same time, I would anxiously guard against being supposed to insinuate, that any particular writers have acted either in a confederacy, or with a covert design, or with a definite prospect at the time of ulterior advances. The reverse of all this is now pretty generally understood and admitted; and besides, had the case been otherwise, the "Tracts for the Times" have now (and I say it without the slightest disposition to murmur at the appointment,) become mere "matter of history." All I am supposing is, that the divines in question acted for the best under the circumstances; and it seems to have been quite a necessary result of

their so acting, that they should *begin* by putting forward the *sterner* side of Catholic Truth; leaving it for themselves, or for others, as might be, to follow up their (confessedly) elementary teaching as circumstances might demand or warrant, by supplemental or explanatory additions. These latter observations are the more incumbent on me, because you appear to think that in speaking of "ulterior steps" in the line of Catholicism as abstractedly *probable*, I meant to intimate that certain individuals had laid as it were their trains, with a view to some premeditated and duly ordered explosion. Nothing, I can assure you, was farther from my thoughts. I spoke as a mere observer, with no more reason than my neighbours for knowing what turn matters were likely to take. I suppose there are few persons indeed, whose minds the present posture of ecclesiastical affairs strikes as a settled one; and a writer professing loyalty to the Catholic Church, could hardly have been expected to predict a change in a *retrograde* direction. With this kind of feeling, I wrote the following sentence; little expecting that any one would have thought it worth a long and elaborate pamphlet. "We cannot stand where we are: we must go backwards or forwards, and it will surely be the latter." And an *advance*, in the truest sense of the word, it will be when the Church shall come to robe herself in her ancient garments of *beauty*, and be recognized as the Guide of our devo-

tions, no less than the Arbiter of our Faith. We shall, such is my own expectation, as we proceed, at once "go farther" in Catholicism than we now do, and *seem* to go less far. New truths will be elicited, and new principles evolved; but, inasmuch as they will operate against the undue *protrusion* of particular features of the subject, the impression caused will be one of *consistency* rather than extravagance. This may serve to illustrate a phenomenon even of present times, which is this; that some, among the more *moderate* of those who have taken part in the late movement, have appeared to cause more of perplexity and offence to many minds, than others who, by the representatives of those moderate opinions, are considered as in an extreme.

Great, then, is the acceptance among religious men of all sides which may be anticipated for Catholic doctrine, as little roughnesses, and irregularities, inseparable from the inchoate state of any work, come in time to disappear; and first impressions more or less (unavoidably) partial, are corrected by subsequent experience. The *leaning* of divines who have attempted, with whatever effect, but assuredly with a sincere intention, to elevate the religious tone of their age, has been, no doubt, on the whole towards the *severer* side. Yet who will deny that this was at least the *safer* of the two? Who will say, that her actual circumstances, for one humble and rite soul which might be wounded by a too

prominent exhibition of the sterner features of the Gospel revelation, there would not, probably, be in every congregation even hundreds of callous ones, which would have been confirmed in their self-satisfaction by a merely attractive display of Catholic consolations? Starting, then, as the Oxford writers did, at a time of prevailing self-indulgence, and, what is more, when religious sentiments were abroad, calculated much rather to encourage the general laxity than to withstand it, they would be keenly alive to the risk of blunting the point of their rebukes, and weakening the solemnity of their protests, by reserves and qualifications, which, nevertheless, they may have meant to *imply*, and would have no kind of difficulty, at the proper season, in *avowing*. Indeed, it seems to be the condition of all valuable and successful (public) instruction, that it should be *more or less* one-sided. A preacher, or practical writer, must shape his teaching according to his impression of *average* needs and circumstances. It is often impossible to satisfy the few good, without lulling the many bad or indifferent; and, though it be a great evil that the good should be perplexed, it is a far greater evil that the careless should be hardened. I do not deny that there is a medium between an indecisive and an inconsiderate tone of teaching, which some living theologians appear to me exactly to have hit; but we have no right to look for such happy tact in the great majority, even of excellent

and most serviceable preachers and writers. And it may be observed farther, that one of the modes by which *general* rules and statements (such as, of course, teachers must necessarily make in public) get corrected by reference to the special circumstances of individuals, is that of *private communication with a spiritual director*; a practice, which, as well from the want of a due estimate on the part of our Clergy, of their proper position, as from the want of a spirit of submission in our people, has fallen into very lamentable desuetude, and which I, for one, should not wish to see revived, at least in a formal and systematic way, without great caution, and after a course of preparatory training.

Now, as was intimated in a note to the article, one of the subjects which can hardly remain precisely in the position in which some of our divines have been compelled to leave it, and all the future *steps* of which will be, as may be expected, *at once in a more Catholic, and in a more conciliatory* direction, is that of "Sin after Baptism." How, on the one hand, we are to recede from the views of this solemn question (taking them as a whole) which have been put out by Dr. Pusey and others, except in proportion as we also recede from Christianity itself, it is difficult to understand. That sin in the baptized is wholly different from sin in the unregenerate; that one who sins *mortally* after Baptism is thereby placed, for the time being, out of that state of salva-

tion *in* which he is placed by Baptism; that, however, not every sin, but only *mortal* sin operates to this effect; (where a distinction is implied between mortal and venial sins) and, again, that mere change of life, without compunction and penance, is not of itself enough to reinstate the lapsed in the condition from which they have fallen, since what a Sacrament has given, a Sacrament, or, at least, Sacramental ordinance, only can (*generally* speaking) restore; these may surely be reckoned among the most indisputable of Catholic truths.

But all this is far indeed from saying, either that deadly sin committed after Baptism is irremissible, (the Novatian heresy condemned, by implication, in our Sixteenth Article), or that a (conditional) *assurance* of pardon is not vouchsafed, under the Gospel, to the Christian penitent; which is what divines of our own time have been *supposed* to mean, for want, as would appear, of a more explicit recognition, than circumstances have admitted, of certain *adjustments* of the doctrine, for which the theory of the Catholic Church provides. These, I need hardly say, are to be found in the Power of the Keys administered after "special Confession," and upon the condition of satisfactory Penance¹. Now, there can be no doubt, that the doctrine of post-baptismal sin, as *abstractedly*

¹ In this account of the ecclesiastical system, as it bears upon the restoration of the penitent, I have purposely confined myself to the language of our own formularies.

stated, is discouraging enough; while, at the same time, it is impossible, under actual circumstances, to speak of its appointed *correctives* (as furnished in the discipline of the Church) without seeming to use unreal words. Persons, then, who feel that the lax notions of the day must, at any rate, be combated, are driven upon a course which many of them feel to be more or less open, and that without prospect of satisfactory explanation, to some of the objections made against it on the score of its severity. Meanwhile, the especial difficulties which embarrass the whole subject are felt by moderate persons to be very successfully surmounted in some of the earlier of the Sermons in Mr. Newman's Sixth Volume, as well as in the Seventh and Eighth of the Fourth Volume. The author will be found to take a middle course between, on the one hand, merely stating the doctrine of the Church on the subject of post-baptismal sin in a hard inconsiderate way, and, on the other, qualifying it by reference to ecclesiastical provisions unhappily (during the suspension of that "godly discipline" for which our Church annually longs) *in abeyance* among us. In the place, then, of those *special authoritative penances* imposed by the Church, and undergone in the spirit of faith and obedience, by which, in a perfect state of things, the Christian penitent would earn the privilege of Absolution, the author directs his hearers and readers either to *mortification of*

the flesh, practised in compliance with the Church's ordinary rules, or again, to *sufferings* which come in the way of providential appointment, as means of repairing the spiritual damage caused by sin in the regenerate. And, in such measure as the Christian deals fairly with his conscience in the use of these remedies (always, surely, accessible to him), he may humbly appropriate to himself at least the *public* Absolution of the Church. Above all, Mr. Newman dwells on the comforting and encouraging doctrine, that from the moment a sinner *begins* to repent he is taken into the Divine favour, and restored to the relation of sonship which he had forfeited; and, whether it be voluntary discipline which he practises as a means of purification, or involuntary suffering which he accepts as a token of love, and *offers* in union with the Great Sacrifice which alone imparts virtue to any act or suffering of ours; he does all, and bears all, with the confidence of a forgiven son, who has come in sight, though not into full possession, of his promised Home. If only he be true to himself, the work which has been begun will surely, with whatever conditions of intermediate discipline, be consummated in him; whether he live or die, he lives or dies in the state of grace; and if detained from the *fulfillment* of privilege from which he had fallen, it is only that he may be made meet to enjoy it in God's good time.

This is a very brief and unsatisfactory reference to

a wide and most important subject. What has been said, however, little as it is, may answer its purpose of showing how Catholic doctrines and practices may be expected to approve themselves to the minds and hearts of many, who have been startled by representations of necessity more or less partial.

I should not find it difficult to illustrate my meaning by other instances, had not this letter already run to a considerable, and, I fear, wearisome length. One subject occurs to me at the moment, as among those on which time may be expected to do much in correcting misapprehension,—the doctrine of Reserve in the communication of religious knowledge. But this is a question which you may possibly find discussed in a somewhat different connexion.

With a few words of qualification, I will bring my remarks to an end.

How, it may be said, will it be possible to move along the “line of Catholicism,” without coming at last to Rome? Now it is a mere truism to say, that, so far as Rome is Catholic, we, in proportion as we become more so, must *tend* towards her. On the other hand, it must surely be right to try and recover Catholic principles *at any rate*. To this work then we must set ourselves, without taking consequences into the account. If, as we get clear of modern corruptions, it be found that we and Rome more and more approximate to each other, this will be

so far a proof, not that we are mistaken, but that Rome is Catholic. If, as some say, Rome has taken the world unreservedly and inseparably into her embrace, then, as we rise in holiness, we shall more and more part company from her; but this I suppose is maintained by few indeed of those with whom this argument is likely to have any weight at all. And where any is disposed to admit only so much as that Rome is a part of Christendom, (which is surely not a great deal to expect,) he will not be apt to take the side of those who consider that union with her is an evil *in the abstract*.

And this extent of admission, as it is what few will refuse, so is it all which the argument requires. Even, then, were we to allow that the course to which our Church seems to be called, has a tendency to unite us with portions of Christendom from which we are actually dissevered, who, except an extreme Protestant, will say that this tendency alone is enough to throw discredit on it?

On the other hand, we, of course, are not prepared to concede to any one that the *tendency* to Rome can by possibility be so clear an *evil* as the return to Catholic ways is a *good*. And nothing short of this could make it right to put up with our present corruptions, *merely* on the ground that it is better to bear present ills than risk still greater ones.

And while we ask certain concessions, we are prepared to *make* certain others in return. We have,

then, no desire whatever for union with Rome, except so far forth as Rome is Catholic. Let her be proved uncatholic, and the question is at an end; but if she be essentially Catholic, and but accidentally corrupt, then we renounce her accidental corruptions, and desire to ally ourselves with her essential Catholicity.

But more than this; we have no inclination to recognize union with the rest of Christendom as a *first* object. An inestimable blessing, of course, all Christians must esteem it; and, accordingly, *an* object among others. But our first and immediate duties are nearer home. Let us seek, then, to purify our own hearts, and act up to our professions; let us love and edify one another; let us make common cause with holiness wherever found in alliance with the truth, or with a truth-seeking temper. Let us throw ourselves with humility and confidingness into the duties which Providence has placed in our way; so may we be assured that He who holds hearts in His Hand will dispose our estranged brethren towards us, and us towards them, and cause His One Holy Catholic Church, to be in the end the joy of the whole earth. Ours, it is true, may be the work, and our children's the glory; we may die (as one has beautifully said ¹) in sight, but not as yet in possession, of the Promised Land; still, better far to

¹ Dr. Wiseman's Letter to Lord Shrewsbury.

live and die in banishment and isolation, than to anticipate God's time, and purchase His blessings at the expense even of one among those meek and dutiful tempers, which are the indispensable conditions of their value.

I have the honour to be, Reverend Sir,
&c. &c.

Feast of St. Barnabas, 1842.

THE END.

